

Finding of No Significant Impact
Bruneau Duck Ponds Wetland Burn
Environmental Assessment (DOI-BLM-ID-B011-2011-0011-EA)

I have reviewed the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations (CEQ) for significance (40 CFR 1508.27) and have determined the actions analyzed in the Environmental Assessment (DOI-BLM-ID-B011-2011-0011-EA) would not constitute a major federal action that would significantly affect the quality of the human environment; therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement is not required. This finding was made by considering both the context and intensity of the potential effects, as described in the above EA, using the following factors defining significance:

1) Impacts that may be both beneficial and adverse.

The Proposed Action would suppress noxious weeds and directly improve wildlife habitat at Bruneau Duck Ponds (EA sections 3.1.2.2 and 3.2.2.2). There may be short term adverse impacts to wildlife (EA Section 3.2.2.2). There would be a direct, but short term, adverse impact on air quality in the C. J. Strike Airshed (EA Section 3.4.2.2); however, national ambient air quality standards would not be exceeded.

2) The degree to which the proposed action affects public health or safety.

No adverse effects to public health were identified in the EA. The prescribed burns would comply with public safety and smoke management protocols (EA Section 3.3.4.2, Prescribed Burn Plan pp. 21-22, 28, 45-46, 48-49). Proposed herbicides to be used have been analyzed for human health and safety hazards (EA Section 3.1.2.2). Weed treatments would conform to actions analyzed in the Noxious and Invasive Weed Treatment EA. (ID-100-2005-265).

3) Unique characteristics of the geographic area such as proximity to historic or cultural resources, park lands, prime farmlands, wetlands, wild and scenic rivers, or ecologically critical areas.

No major effects on unique characteristics are identified in the EA. No adverse effects on cultural or historical resources, parklands, prime farmlands, wild and scenic rivers, or ecologically critical areas were identified in the EA (EA Section 3.0). Adverse impacts to wetlands would minimal, short-term in duration until plants regrow during the first growing season after the burn, and would benefit wetland vegetation conditions over the long term (EA Section 3.1.2.2)

4) The degree to which the effects on the quality of the human environment are likely to be highly controversial.

The analysis identified no controversy or substantial disagreement regarding the effects on the quality of the human environment from implementing the proposed action.

5) The degree to which the possible effects on the human environment are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks.

The prescribed fire and herbicide treatments recommended in the proposed action are well understood and practiced by many federal, state, and private entities.

- 6) ***The degree to which the action may establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects, or represents a decision in principle about a future consideration.***

The proposed action is independent of all other actions, and does not represent a commitment of BLM resources beyond that described in the Environmental Assessment and Prescribed Burn Plan.

- 7) ***Whether the action is related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts.***

There would be no significant cumulative impacts associated with the proposed action. There would be direct, short-term adverse impacts to air quality in the local C. J. Strike airshed; however, the potential for overlap with other sources of particulate matter would be negligible (EA Section 3.6.2.2).

- 8) ***The degree to which the action may adversely affect properties listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or may cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historical resources.***

The analysis determined the proposed action would not result in a significant adverse effect to cultural or historic resources (EA, Section 3.5.2.2).

- 9) ***The degree to which the action may adversely affect an endangered or threatened species or its habitat that has determined to be critical under the Endangered Species Act of 1973.***

The analysis showed that no endangered or threatened species occur in the project area (EA Section 3.2).

- 10) ***Whether the action threatens a violation of Federal, State, and local laws, or requirements imposed for protection of the environment.***

The action does not threaten a violation of Federal, State, or local law, or requirements imposed for protection of the environment. The proposed action is in conformance with the applicable Land Use Plan and all State and Federal statutes (EA sections 1.4 and 1.5).

/s/ Patricia Roller
/s/ Patricia Roller
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of Prey Field Manager

2/15/2012
Date